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United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott
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CONTACT: Lauren Horwood
PHONE: (916) 554-2706
lauren.horwood@usdoj.gov

FOURTEEN ARRESTED, NEARLY \$1 MILLION SEIZED IN METHAMPHETAMINE DISTRIBUTION OPERATION

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, DEA Assistant Special Agent in Charge Gordon Taylor, and IRS Special Agent in Charge Scott G. O'Briant announced today that a long-term federal investigation of a major methamphetamine trafficking ring in the Sacramento area has resulted in the arrest of 14 persons, the execution of 20 search warrants, and recovery of a large quantity of methamphetamine and cash.

This case is the product of an extensive/joint investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, and the Sacramento Police Department. The investigation included the use of a court-authorized federal wiretap.

Arrested yesterday and today were MIGUEL VASQUEZ, 36, of Cameron Park, Calif., FRANK BLUE IV, 19, of Sacramento, Calif., CAMERON CRAVEN, 40, of West Sacramento, Calif., RHIANNON WRIGHT, 31, of Carmichael, Calif., WILLIE THOMAS, 37, of Antelope, Calif., OSIEL BETANCUR, 34, of Sacramento, Calif., RENE WRIGHT, 49, of Rescue, Calif., JUAN VEGA, 27, of Elverta, Calif., JUSTIN WITT, 30, of Sacramento, Calif., JASON BRACY, 36, of West Sacramento, Calif., RANDALL ORTIZ, 29, of Carmichael, Calif., TOBY VANN, 40, of Sacramento, Calif., LEON EDWARDS, 35, of Rio Linda, Calif., and ROBERT SCOTT, 55, of Sacramento, Calif. Three additional persons remain fugitives.

Twenty search warrants were executed at residences, on vehicles, safe deposit boxes, and an area business. Currency in the amount of approximately \$700,000 was seized from two safe deposit boxes and a residential safe. Seizure warrants resulted in agents taking an additional \$200,000 from two bank accounts. Thirteen guns and a tazer were recovered in the searches, and approximately 10 pounds of methamphetamine seized from a sophisticated vehicle hidden compartment that operated through the use of hydraulics.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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